

REMARKS

The present application was filed on February 20, 2002 with claims 1 through 20. Claims 1-20 are presently pending in the above-identified patent application. The present amendment proposes to amend each independent claim 1, 7, 13, and 16 and to cancel claims 5, 5 11, 14 and 19, without prejudice.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 7, 13 and 16 are objected to because of the following informalities: a period is missing at the end of each of the claims. Applicants note that each of the claims included a period and suspect that the objection is due to a scanning error.

10 The Examiner also rejected claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-13, 15-18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable by Prasanna (United States Patent No. 6,272, 599) in view of Prasanna (hereinafter Prasanna 2) (United States Patent No. 6,317,874). The Examiner indicated that claims 5,11, 14 and 19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of 15 the base claim and any intervening claims and that the 35 U.S.C 101 rejections are overcome. Applicants note that the present Office Action does not contain a section 101 rejection and believe that this is a hold-over comment from a prior rejection.

20 Applicants have amended each independent claim 1, 7, 13, and 16 in order to include the limitations of the allowed claims 5, 11, 14 and 19. In addition, claims 5, 11, 14 and 19 have been cancelled, without prejudice. Thus, Applicants believe that all claims are now allowable.

Dependent Claims

Dependent claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-15, and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over Prasanna.

25 Claims 2-4, 6, 8-10, 12, 15, and 17-18 and 20 are dependent on claims 1, 7, 13, and 16, respectively, and are therefore patentably distinguished over Prasanna because of their dependency from independent claims 1, 7, 13, and 16 for the reasons set forth above, as well as

other elements these claims add in combination to their base claim.

All of the pending claims, i.e., claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-13, 15-18 and 20, are in condition for allowance and such favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If any outstanding issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions  
5 for expediting allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

The Examiner's attention to this matter is appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



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10 Date: October 23, 2007

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